

Feeling on edge made crowds a no-go

Richard: Sleepless nights, every loud, just tell-tale sounds, loud noises, vivid flashbacks, I could still smell it and it makes you not want to do nothing. It makes you want to stay secluded in your home because I knew the ins and outs of my house, once I got out into a crowd I didn't know where the exit was, I didn't know if you were friendly, if you weren't friendly, if you had an attitude, if you didn't. So I had a short fuse, if you looked at me the wrong way I would basically walk up to you and say "you got an issue?". Luckily, for me there wasn't those bad guys and girls out there that would have responded in a negative way, you know they kind of stood back and kind of looked at me because they knew I was not at 100%. Yeah, crowds, I was not having it. I could not do a crowd until maybe here recently because I never knew what was coming. So crowds was a no-go. If there was more than 10 people there, whether it is in a room, or for example a mall you wouldn't find me there. Luckily my current wife is a Marine, so she was there, she had been deployed, she has been to Iraq. So she was there through every step of the process and I think if it wasn't for her saying, "enough is enough" and that internal fire in me that said "Okay, maybe taking all of these pills is not helping me, it is actually keeping me down." So it took a little process to get out of where I was to finally say, you know what I need to do something else, this isn't me. We got some great resources, that you kind of start outside for free and then they will work you into the VA. So I started counseling outside and she kind of broke it down. I was having all of the symptoms of PTSD. Then I finally give in, I said "You know what it is time for me to do this right way." So I started going to VA mental health. I think I took a couple of steps back before everything started really working in my favor and it opened my eyes and let me see that, you know I really did have a problem and there was no way I was going to do it by myself.



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